

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 24648 01 OF 02 241645Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 AF-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SY-05 SCCT-01 A-01 OPR-02 SCA-01 SCS-03 EB-07

COME-00 PPT-01 IO-13 /107 W
----- 106261

R 241636Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4286
INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 24648

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, FR
SUBJECT: NEW DISTURBANCES IN CORSICA

REF: A. PARIS 02342; B. NICE 174

1. SUMMARY: LATE IN THE EVENING OF AUGUST 22ND
MAX SIMEONI, BROTHER OF IMPRISONED CORSICAN
AUTONOMOUS LEADER EDMOND SIMEONI (REF A), ACCOMPANIED
BY FIFTEEN MASKED MEN, DYNAMITED THE WINE STOCK OF AN
ABSENTEE NORTH AFRICAN VINTNER. THE ACT HAS BEEN
ROUNDLY CONDEMNED BY MOST CORSICANS AND METROPOLITANS
ALIKE, AND A MANHUNT IS NOW UNDERWAY FOR THE FUGITIVE
SIMEONI. END SUMMARY.

2. AT THE VERY TIME WHEN AN IMPORTANT CORSICAN
POLITICAL ASSOCIATION ADVOCATING A PEACEFUL ROAD TO
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PAGE 02 PARIS 24648 01 OF 02 241645Z

INCREASED LOCAL GOVERNMENT ON THE ISLAND WAS HOLDING

A CONFERENCE IN A NEARBY VILLAGE, MAX SIMEONI AND FIFTEEN OTHER MEN OCCUPIED, THEN EXPLODED, THE WINE STOCK OF ABSENTEE NORTH AFRICAN VINTER COHEN-SKALI. HE THEN CALLED A BRIEF PRESS CONFERENCE AT WHICH HE STATED THAT THE PURPOSE OF HIS ACT WAS TO BRING THE ATTENTION OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND OF CORSICANS TO THE "FACT" THAT PROMISES MADE BY GOF FOR ASSISTING THE FLAGGING ISLAND ECONOMY HAD NOT BEEN KEPT. THE DATE OF MAX SIMEONI'S ACT, THAT IS TO SAY 22 AUGUST, COINCIDES ALMOST TO THE DAY WITH HIS BROTHER EDMOND'S OCCUPATION OF A WINE COOPERATIVE IN ALGERIA A YEAR AGO. FROM JAIL, EDMOND HAS BEEN RECOMMENDING PATIENCE AND NON-VIOLENCE IN THE WORKING OUT OF CORSICA'S PROBLEMS. IT IS THEREFORE ALL THE MORE SURPRISING THAT MAX SHOULD HAVE CHOSEN SUCH A DESTRUCTIVE WAY OF MANIFESTING HIS DISSATISFACTION WITH GOF POLICIES TOWARDS CORSICA.

3. EARLIER THIS MONTH THE CAR OF NEWLY-NAMED (JANUARY 1976) STATE SECRETARY FOR AGRIBUSINESS JEAN TIBERI, HIMSELF A NATIVE CORSICAN, WAS BLOWN UP IN FRONT OF HIS HOME NEAR CORTE. THE FRONT FOR NATIONAL CORSICAN LIBERATION, AN OUTLAWED AUTONOMOUS MOVEMENT, LATER TOOK CREDIT FOR THE BOMBING. THE ASSOCIATION OF CORSICAN PATRIOTS (ACP), SUCCESSOR TO EDMOND SIMEONI'S NOW OUTLAWED ASSOCIATION FOR THE RENAISSANCE OF CORSICA, HAS APPARENTLY BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN ATTEMPTING TO STILL MOUNTING TEMPERS ON THE ISLAND. THE ACP HAS CONDEMNED THE WINE-STOCK BOMBING, AND THE CORSICAN COMMUNIST PARTY HAS ALSO CONDEMNED THIS NEW ACT OF VIOLENCE. BUT OTHER PARTIES ON THE ISLAND (SOCIALISTS, UDR, AND INDEPENDENT REPUBLICANS) ARE SO FAR REMAINING SILENT.

4. TOURISM HAS DROPPED CONSIDERABLY IN CORSICA DURING THE SUMMER FROM PREVIOUS YEARS, DUE IN PART

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PAGE 01 PARIS 24648 02 OF 02 241659Z

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4287

INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 24648

TO THE GENERAL DECLINE IN TOURISM IN SOUTHERN FRANCE THAT HAS MANIFESTED ITSELF THIS YEAR, BUT DUE ALSO TO THE ATMOSPHERE OF TENSION AND POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY THAT REIGNS ON THE ISLAND. JEAN RIOLACCI, CORSICAN PREFECT, HAS FLATLY CONDEMNED THE BOMBING AND HE SEEMS JUSTIFIED IN STATING THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAS MADE EVERY EFFORT TO PUMP UP THE ISLAND'S ECONOMY. NEVERTHELESS IN THE FACE OF ESTABLISHED LOCAL NOTABLES NEW FORCES ARE APPEARING, AND SOME OBSERVERS INTERPRET THE CURRENT EVENTS AS THOSE OF A PRE-ELECTION ATMOSPHERE (MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ARE SCHEDULED FOR SPRING 1977). WHILE THE AUTONOMISTS THEMSELVES MAY NOT PRESENT CANDIDATES IN THESE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS, THEY MAY BE ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE THE ELECTION OR DEFEAT OF THOSE WHO ARE OR ARE NOT IN SYMPATHY WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 PARIS 24648 02 OF 02 241659Z

CAUSES THEY ESPOUSE.

5. COMMENT: SIMEONI'S ACT, THOUGH IT HITS ONCE AGAIN AT THE ABSENTEE LANDLORD, SEEMS MORE A MANIFESTATION OF HIS PERSONALITY THAN OF ANY DEEP GRIEVANCE CURRENTLY HELD BY CORSICANS. SIMEONI HIMSELF, IN HIS BRIEF PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING THE BOMBING, HASTENED TO ACQUIT COHEN-SKALI OF ANY SUSPICION OF OUT-AND-OUT WRONGDOING. WHAT HE WANTS IS FOR GOF TO EXPROPRIATE OUTRIGHT THE PROPERTY OF COHEN-SKALI AND OTHER FRENCH SETTLERS ON THE

ISLAND REPATRIATED FROM NORTH AFRICA, THEN TURN IT
OVER IN A "MORE EQUITABLE FASHION" TO NATIVE WINE
GROWERS. ONCE AGAIN THE COURT OF STATE SECURITY HAS
BEEN BROUGHT INTO THE AFFAIR AND IT SEEMS SAFE TO
PREDICT THAT MAX WILL RECEIVE FAR LESS PUBLIC SYMPATHY
FOR HIS GRATUITOUS VIOLENCE THAN DID HIS BROTHER
EDMOND, EVEN THOUGH IN THE PRESENT SITUATION NO
DEATHS HAVE YET OCCURRED.
GAMMON

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